

### *Claim Amendments*

1-6. (canceled)

7. (canceled)

8. (cancelled)

9. (currently amended) The system of claim 15, the control card and the at least one forwarding card are configured to maintain the infrastructure module further comprising a namespace to allow registration of the control card and the at least one forwarding card components of the infrastructure module.

10. (currently amended) The system of claim 15, the control card is configured to the infrastructure module further comprising a control plane protocol module registration module and a packet redirection module packets according to a scope of the second portion of the functionality of the control plane protocol.

11.-14. (cancelled)

15. (currently amended) A system, comprising:

a control card plane ~~having a controller control plane protocol module configured to~~ implement ~~a core~~ at least a first portion of functionality of a control plane protocol module;

at least one forwarding card plane ~~having a worker control plane protocol module configured to implement a second portion of the functionality of the control plane protocol module~~ that is separate and distinct from the ~~core~~ first portion of the functionality; and

a backplane configured to couple the control card to the at least one forwarding card and to provide connectivity between the control card plane and the forwarding card plane; and  
wherein:

~~each of an infrastructure module resident on the control card plane and the at least one forwarding card plane constructed and arranged is configured discover other cards of to manage the connectivity between the control card plane and the at least one forwarding card plane; and~~

~~each of a communication library resident on the control card plane and the at least one forwarding card plane is configured to communicate with the infrastructure module to obtain information about the functionality of the control plane protocol modules and to setup connections with among the functionality of the control plane protocol implemented on the control card and the at least one forwarding card modules such that the functionality implemented on the other cards is presented to the functionality implemented on the card as a process running on the card.~~

16-18. (canceled)

19. (currently amended) A method of distributing processing in a network device, comprising:

defining a controller control plane protocol module and at least one worker control plane protocol module[[s]], wherein the controller control plane protocol module implements at least a first portion of eere functionality of a control plane protocol module on a control card plane, and wherein the worker control plane protocol module implements a second portion of the control plane protocol module that is separate and distinct from the eere first portion of the functionality on at least one forwarding card plane; and

~~developing corresponding entries in a communications library;~~

establishing communication among the controller control plane protocol module and the at least one worker control plane protocol module such that for each of the control plane protocol module and the at least one worker control plane protocol module, an interface for the other modules is presented to the module as a process running on the corresponding card.

~~implementing an infrastructure module, the communication library and the controller module on a control plane the control plane; and~~

~~implementing the infrastructure module, the communication library and the worker modules on a forwarding plane the at least one forwarding plane; and~~

~~wherein the infrastructure module is constructed and arranged to manage the connectivity between the control plane and the forwarding plane, and wherein the communication library resides on the control plane and the forwarding plane to communicate with the infrastructure module to obtain information about control plane protocol modules and to setup connections with the control plane protocol modules.~~

20.-21. (cancelled)

22. (currently amended) An article of machine readable instructions that, when executed, cause the machine to:

define a controller control plane protocol module and at least one worker control plane protocol module[[s]], wherein the controller control plane protocol module implements at least a first portion of eere functionality of a control plane protocol module on a control card plane, and wherein the worker control plane protocol module implements a second portion of the control plane protocol module that is separate and distinct from the eere first portion of the functionality on at least one forwarding card plane; and

establishing communication among the controller control plane protocol module and the at least one worker control plane protocol module such that for each of the control plane protocol module and the at least one worker control plane protocol module, an interface for the other modules is presented to the module as a process running on the corresponding card.

~~develop corresponding entries in a communications library;~~

~~implement an infrastructure module, the communication library and the controller module on a control plane; and~~

~~implement the infrastructure module, the communication library and the worker modules on a forwarding plane; and~~

~~wherein the infrastructure module is constructed and arranged to manage the connectivity between the control plane and the forwarding plane, and wherein the communication library resides on the control plane and the forwarding plane to communicate with the infrastructure module to obtain information about control plane protocol modules and to setup connections with the control plane protocol modules.~~

23.-24. (cancelled)